

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application. The Final Office Action mailed March 7, 2006 rejected all pending claims. Reconsideration of the Claim rejections is requested in view of the Claims amendments, the following Remarks and Examiner interview on June 6, 2006.

Claims 1, 7, 9, 14, 16 and 22 are herewith amended to more clearly recite Applicants novel invention. Claims 8, 15 and 23 are herewith canceled. No new matter has been added.

A telephonic interview with Examiner Evans was conducted on June 6, 2006, through an Applicant Initiated Interview Request, in regard to the above-referenced application. The participants of the interview included Examiner Evans and Patent Attorney Jeffrey Wax. No exhibits were utilized during the interview. Claims 1, 7 and 8 were discussed. The Office Action cited references entitled Le (U.S. 2004/0184688) and Aiello (U.S. 2004/0218841) were discussed.

Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16-22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Le (U.S. 2004/0184688). The Office Action also rejects claims 1, 6-9, 13-16 and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Aiello (U.S. 2004/0218841).

Applicants traverse the claims rejection. In order to serve as a §102 reference, the reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly (MPEP §706.02). The cited references Le '688 and Aiello '841 have not done so for at least the following reasons.

Applicants Claimed Invention:

Applicants claimed invention is directed in part at a thrust surface, situated between a fluid recirculation path and a journal bearing, which maintains fluid flow through a journal bearing. The recirculation path is provided in part to purge air from the journal bearing and other fluid containing areas.

Applicants herewith amend independent claims 1, 9 and 16 to more clearly recite the claimed invention. Two separate thrust surfaces provide an axial force in the same direction. Specifically, as amended, Applicants claim a second thrust surface at an axial end of the rotatable component and situated axially distal from the inboard thrust surface. The inboard thrust surface and second thrust surface generate axial forces in the same direction. It is submitted that independent claims 1, 9 and 16 are in allowable form and are not anticipated by the cited references.

Further, by employing an inboard thrust surface that provides fluid flow, journal bearing asymmetry can be minimized or eliminated. Axial span is then maximized between journal bearings, reducing wobble or run-out between relatively rotating components. In another embodiment, journal axial length can be minimized for low profile disc drives.

The cited Reference Le '688:

Le describes a sealing system that withstands shock. A fluid reservoir is described with axial channels. Although Le describes pumping grooves 324 on thrust plate 283, the present invention as amended claims two thrust surfaces, one being inboard and a second formed at an axial end of the rotatable component.

The cited Reference Aiello '841:

Aiello '841 describes a V-shaped or countersink device to collect and trap air bubbles. (Aiello, Abstract). Further, in contrast to Aiello, Applicants claim two thrust surfaces, one being inboard and a second formed at an axial end of the rotatable component situated axially distal from the first thrust surface, wherein the first thrust surface generates an axial force in the same direction as a second axial force generated by the second thrust surface. (Applicants independent claims 1, 9 and 16).

Applicants Dependent Claims 2-7, 10-14 and 17-22

It is submitted that Applicants dependent claims 2-7, 10-14 and 17-22 are allowable for at least the reasons stated above with regard to their independent claims. Further, it is submitted that Applicants dependent claims recite further features and combinations of features that are patentably distinct and not taught or suggested by Le '688 and Aiello '841.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 1-23 as amended patentably define the subject invention over the cited references of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would be useful in moving the case forward, please contact the undersigned at Tel. (310) 312-1500.


Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on June 6, 2006.


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